

THE HISTORICAL TRAIL



The Historical Trail

Yearbook of the Historical Society of the
Southern New Jersey Annual Conference of
The Methodist Church

Vol. 2

1966

No. 2

FOREWORD

This Historical Trail booklet edited by the Rev. Robert B. Steelman and his committee, is one of the Conference Historical Society's features to better acquaint us with the early background of Methodism's rich heritage.

The information in this booklet deals with the grass roots of Methodism in New Jersey.

We trust our members and friends will find this issue helpful.

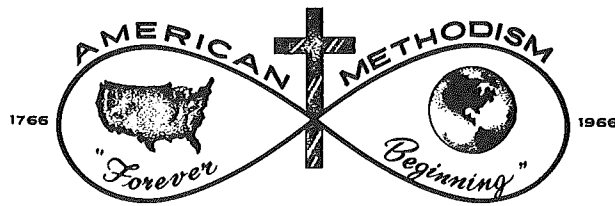
Many thanks to all who have given of their time, research and interest in preparing these articles.

Your support of our Society is greatly appreciated. Call on us if we can be of help to you.

D. C. Evans, President

Cover:
Statue of Francis Asbury on
The Drew University Campus,
Madison, N.J.

Photo courtesy of
Joseph Henry Bennett



METHODISM AND HER CHURCHES IN THE BEGINNING IN NEW JERSEY

At the time of an anniversary celebration, our minds go back to the beginnings. This year the people called Methodists are going back to the beginning of our church in the land called America. Once a thing is begun or a person is born, it is hard to realize that there has been a time when these did not exist. It seems this way to us as we think about The Methodist Church. Again as we look to a period of time such as the 200 years of The Methodist Church in America, it seems very lengthy until we compare it with the almost 2,000 years of the existence of Christianity. Our little period of time is a mere moment compared to all the years of Christianity and only a slight ticking in man's period of worshipping God prior to Christianity. Indeed, we are thankful that length of time is not the indication of the value of a church.

The Methodist Church, originally known as The Methodist Episcopal Church, has had its place to fill and its obligations to fulfill in the work of the kingdom of God. Who were the first Methodists to share the concern of John Wesley with the people living in New Jersey? Where were the first societies established to carry on the work of the "Methodists?" The answers to these questions cannot be given so clearly and definitely as we should like to do.

In the early days, prior to the organization of Methodists into a separate church in 1784, Methodists were known as societies with their church membership in the Church of England. Two men are given the distinction of forming some of these early societies: John Early, a native of Ireland, settled in New Jersey in 1764; and Captain Thomas Webb, an officer in the British Army, spent a week in Burlington in 1768.

There are many answers and little agreement to, "Where were the first societies established to carry on the work of the Methodists?" This year, the year of the bicentennial of American

Methodism, one church in New Jersey is celebrating its 200th anniversary. This church is the Bethel Methodist Church, Hurffville, New Jersey. John Early, the first Methodist in the state, lived in this section of New Jersey. **The History of the Counties of Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland** by Cushing and Sheppard states, "Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church, Hurffville, founded in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy, and incorporated the 17th day of February, . . ." and "The old church building, according to the record was used as a place of worship from 1770 to 1840 . . ." Another piece of information considered by the Bethel Church causes them to write in the **History of Bethel Methodist Church 1945** "1766 – This date was taken from the fact that the Trustees in 1866 decided to hold a Camp Meeting in the woods of John D. Turner as a fitting memorial, and this Camp Meeting was known as the Centennial Camp Meeting."

Another church to be considered among the first in New Jersey is the Pemberton Methodist Church. Woodward and Hageman's history of Burlington and Mercer Counties states, "New Mills (Pemberton) is the manger in which Methodism in New Jersey was born: here the first Methodist Church in West Jersey was built. Here Capt. Thomas Webb preached in 1770." The Pemberton Church states in its history, "Captain Webb, learning that a flourishing society existed there, preached to the 'Methodists' probably in 1768 or 1769." Again in the written history of the church, it is said, "Dr. Coke in 1785 wrote of New Mills (Pemberton) that 'The place has been favored with a faithful ministry for sixteen years' ". This would fix the date of 1769 as the latest date for the origin of this society.

It is obvious that Woodman and Hageman's history has a misprint when it states that the Broad Street Methodist Church of Burlington was begun in 1790. It states, "The first sermon preached in West Jersey by a Methodist preacher was by Capt. Charles T. Webb, at Burlington, in 1790, when the Broad Street Methodist Episcopal Church was founded" In **Memorials of Methodism in New Jersey** by Atkinson, it is recorded " . . . we find Captain Webb preaching justification by faith in the town of Burlington, New Jersey, as early as the year 1770." The account feels that it was possible that Captain Webb could have preached here "at a little earlier period than this..." The history of the Burlington Church states that Captain Webb spent a week in Burlington during November 1768. Captain Webb formed the first class here on December 14, 1770, and appointed Joseph Toy as its leader. It was at Burlington that Francis Asbury preached his first sermon in New Jersey on November 7, 1771.

"The doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church was intro-

duced in Trenton, about the year 1766 by Captain Thomas Webb of the British Army," according to Woodward and Hageman's history. In 1771, Joseph Toy who had started the class in Burlington, organized a class in Trenton. In July 1772, the Trenton Society secured subscriptions from 122 persons and erected a meeting house at the corner of Academy and Green (now Broad) Streets. Francis Asbury laid the cornerstone April 22, 1773.

All four of these churches had their beginnings within the first few years of the arrival of Methodism to America. During the period from 1772-1784, about twenty-five of our present day Methodist churches had their beginnings. These churches are found in all sections of our conference.

Far more important than which church had its origin first is the answer to such a question as to why the Methodist Church was begun. The answer to this would help us to explain why it seems that the Methodist Church has always existed. The Methodist Church did not begin Christianity but continued the teachings of Christ. Wesley, as we well know, did not seek to establish a new denomination but to bring a renewal. Circumstances made it necessary for this renewal to come through a new denomination. Those things for which Wesley found himself reproved by his church became the beliefs of The Methodist Church. "Absolute assurance of salvation", "Christian Perfection", "a concern for the souls of the person outside the church", "a heart warming experience", and many other teachings that brought man's thought back to God's Word. Rather than a denial or rejection or an explaining away the teachings of Christ the new denomination was founded upon the teaching of the Bible which led Methodism to a strong faith with real certainties as expressed in The Articles of Religion.

The Rev. W. H. Daniels in *The Illustrated History of Methodism in Great Britain and America* wrote concerning Methodism:

"Methodism is divine. It sweeps in the gale, glows with the fire, and speaks with the tongues of Pentecost. The early Methodists were apostolic: nothing short of the ends of the earth could stop them."

This appears to be the history of Methodism as it began to move across the face of America, never stopping until it went with the pioneers to the Pacific Ocean. This is the spirit of Methodism that reached into our state of New Jersey as the first appointees of Wesley came to this land. Rev. Daniels goes on to say,

"When the Methodist preachers began to set forth a Father who is not willing that any of his children should perish; a Saviour who tasted death for every man; and a Spirit whose special work it is to sanctify believers, and to witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, the Lord owned their word as

He did not own the words of much more able and classical and theological men in the pulpits of America; and the multitudes of sinners, finding out who God really was, began to believe on him, seek him, and love him. The Methodist taught a plan of salvation large enough to save completely all who stood in need of it; plain enough for any one to find who looked for it; actually within the reach of any one who sought it; and free for any one who would take it . . . No wonder, then, that a Church with such a theology should have distanced all others . . . This was, doubtless, God's set time, and his appointed way, in which to favor his American Zion."

In this bicentennial year of Methodism in America, with men riding on horse back from many sections of our land to the great celebration in Baltimore, we are reminded of the hardships of those who were so faithful as they plodded many miles to proclaim such a message. The challenge comes to us today, in the midst of our conveniences, to renew once again the message of our church in keeping with the challenge of the renewal John Wesley offered his day, which was in keeping with the message of the first century Christians. Once again in the words of Rev. Daniels, "Methodism has carried no weapons other than Bibles, Hymn Books, and Disciplines; its only inquisitions have been love-feasts and classes; its only camps have been camp-meetings; nevertheless, so grand has been its march and so swift its career of victory, that certain sagacious souls have thought they saw in its doctrines the scheme of the ultimate theology, and in its order the outlines of the ultimate Church." This is the Church whose anniversary we are celebrating. This is the Church in which we find ourselves serving. This is the Church that became great, not because it was The Methodist Church, but because it was a part of the great body of Christian believers following the commands of Jesus Christ and seeking the help of the Holy Spirit to fulfill its "mission" in the world. We, who celebrate this anniversary, are called by this celebration to a renewal of the tenets of our leader John Wesley which are the teachings of our living Saviour, Jesus Christ. May The Methodist Church ever proclaim this message. This was the concern of John Wesley when he said "I am not afraid that the people called Methodist should ever cease to exist in Europe or America. But I am afraid they should only exist as a dead sect having the form of religion without the power."

(J. Hillman Coffee)



Interior of Old St. George's, Philadelphia, World's Oldest Methodist Church edifice in continuous service.

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA and SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY METHODISM

The story of the influence of St. George's Methodist Church, Philadelphia, on Methodism in Southern New Jersey rests partly on solid fact and partly on interesting speculations and references. Men such as Edward Evans, Joseph Pilmoor, John King and others, who were concerned to carry the "good news" across the Delaware, are a part of the earliest history of Old St. George's. Beyond this, there are many exciting clues that indicate the closest ties existed between Old St. George's and historic Methodism in Southern New Jersey.

Edward Evans

One of the first leaders of St. George's was Edward Evans. A maker of ladies shoes in Philadelphia, he was one of the two men who held together the small group of Methodists converted under

George Whitefield in 1739 and 1740. He sustained this leadership until the group was organized in 1767 by Captain Thomas Webb into a Society that later became St. George's Church. Evans' influence in New Jersey is referred to by Joseph Pilmoor, first official pastor of St. George's Church, who writes in his **JOURNAL**: "When Providence brought Mr. Boardman and me to America he (Evans) united with us most heartily, and was made a useful instrument among us, as he frequently went into the Jerseys to preach. The people were exceedingly fond of him, built a pretty chapel and insisted on having him for their minister. After he had been with them a few months he took a fall-fever, which soon brought him to his grave. . . . Being earnestly entreated by the heads of the congregation, I set off early in the morning for Grinage (Greenwich near Gloucester) Chapel, where Mr. Evans was minister, to preach a funeral sermon to his poor disconsolate flock."

Thus, one of the first leaders of St. George's carried the gospel of Christ into New Jersey.

By inference, it is possible to see his influence as extending far beyond Greenwich and Gloucester. He evidently stirred the heart of Pilmoor with the challenge of New Jersey, and Pilmoor's interest in New Jersey may have stemmed partly from Evans' enthusiasm. Evans also knew Captain Thomas Webb whom he may have influenced in the same way. Both Webb and Pilmoor would naturally have preached in New Jersey as they travelled on horseback between Philadelphia and New York especially since their trails led through Burlington and Trenton. But their interest reached beyond these towns, Pilmoor going into Bordentown and Woodbury; Webb into Manahawkin and other places. The least that can be said is that Evans must have kept the mission of New Jersey always before the eyes of Pilmoor and Webb.

John King

Another man of St. George's who served in New Jersey was John King. He came to Philadelphia from England in 1770, desiring to preach. He had no recommendation from John Wesley, however, and Pilmoor refused him a license. Sometime later Pilmoor was surprised to find one of his own services very poorly attended. John King had advertised that he would preach in Potter's Field and many of the St. George's people went to hear him. They returned to Pilmoor with glowing reports of King's ability, and the fair minded Pilmoor set a day for a trial sermon. The result was a license for John King. St. George's had launched a new preacher on the sea of American Methodism. King attended the first conference of American Methodist preachers called by Thomas Rankin at St. George's in 1773. At the conclusion of the conference King

and William Watters were assigned to New Jersey. Watters did not carry out his assignment, going elsewhere to preach, but King was faithful to his appointment. In the place of Watters he brought Philip Gatch with him, leaving Gatch in the vicinity of Trenton while he pushed on deeper into the colony. In 1774 King was assigned to Norfolk, but in 1775 he was back again in New Jersey, being assigned with Daniel Ruff to Trenton. **The Methodist Trail in New Jersey** appropriately lists him as preaching also in Burlington, and he must have preached in many other Jersey locations.

Thomas Haskins

In 1780 Asbury met Thomas Haskins and referred to him as a "young man of learning (who) has been studying law". Asbury influenced him for the ministry and he became an itinerant in 1782. In 1786, however, he settled in Philadelphia, leaving the ministry for the wholesale grocery business with Colonel North of Revolutionary fame. Both men were active in St. George's, Haskins being a local preacher and at one time Treasurer and a Trustee of the church. His first wife died in 1797, and two years later he married Elizabeth Richards. The Richards family conducted Richards' Iron Furnace of Batsto, New Jersey. Haskins and his wife are buried in the little yard at Batsto, near the old Church. Haskins' influence on Batsto Methodism or New Jersey Methodism is hard to appraise, but it is difficult to imagine Haskins being thus closely related to the Batsto Society and its leading family without making some vital impact upon the life of the church.

St. George's and Camden, New Jersey

Clearly documented is the work of James Duer of St. George's in connection with the church first known as the Third Street Methodist Church, Camden. **The Methodist Trail in New Jersey** states: "Under the direction of Rev. Richard Sneath, a class of seven members was formed with James Duer, a member of St. George's, Philadelphia, as leader." As a result of Duer's work Third Street Methodist Church was born, later becoming First Methodist Church, Camden. From this church has gone forth at least eight Methodist ministers and five other Methodist churches.

Another member of St. George's who later went into the ministry in Southern New Jersey was the Rev. Charles H. Whitecar. He was pastor of the Third Street Methodist Church when a request was made to him and his church to form a class on Cooper's Hill. This later became Broadway Methodist Church.

It is interesting to speculate on the reason for the name of the St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Camden which later merged with Wesley Methodist Church to form what is now St.

George's-Wesley Methodist Church. Since St. George's is not a common Methodist name for a church, and since the influence of St. George's is noticeably marked on Camden Methodism it is not unlikely that in the very name of this church there is further evidence of St. George's influence "across the river".

Other men from "over the river"

A large number of men went into the ministry from Old St. George's Church. Dr. Francis H. Tees, a former pastor and a historian of the church, identified over fifty, and an even larger number is claimed by other historians. Many of these men served in New Jersey, some being mentioned in **The Methodist Trail in New Jersey**. James B. Ayres (page 202) is recorded not only as being pastor of New Brunswick but also as having charge of the Milltown group. Gamaliel Bailey is listed in the **Minutes of the Conferences** as being assigned to Trenton in 1792, to Bethel in 1793, to Flanders in 1802 and back to Trenton in 1803. Charles H. Whitecar, already mentioned, is referred to in **The Methodist Trail** . . . as assisting at the dedication ceremonies of the Fieldsboro Methodist Church in 1857. Andrew M. Longacre, another itinerant from Old St. George's also laboured in New Jersey.

The Trustee Records

It is instructive to read the Trustee Records of St. George's Circuit, which in the early days, included several other churches formed by the mother church. Churches up and down the eastern seaboard came to St. George's for help. Dr. Francis H. Tees once said that he had discovered in the records 176 churches along the eastern seaboard that had received assistance from St. George's, and Albert W. Cliffe states in **The Glory of Our Methodist Heritage** that St. George's "gave the nucleus of 43 congregations to New Jersey and Philadelphia Methodism."

When the little church at Flemington, New Jersey, was finding it difficult "to pay for their meeting house" they were aided by a special offering from one of the churches on the St. George's Circuit. On another occasion, permission was granted to the Rev. B.N. Reed of the Green Street Circuit to present the cause of South Trenton and receive an offering from the St. George's people for his church.

And so on

Nor do these hastily gleaned facts and inferences set forth the full story. Many men active in early New Jersey Methodism were closely entwined with St. George's although not necessarily having been converted in that historic setting or licensed by the church to preach.

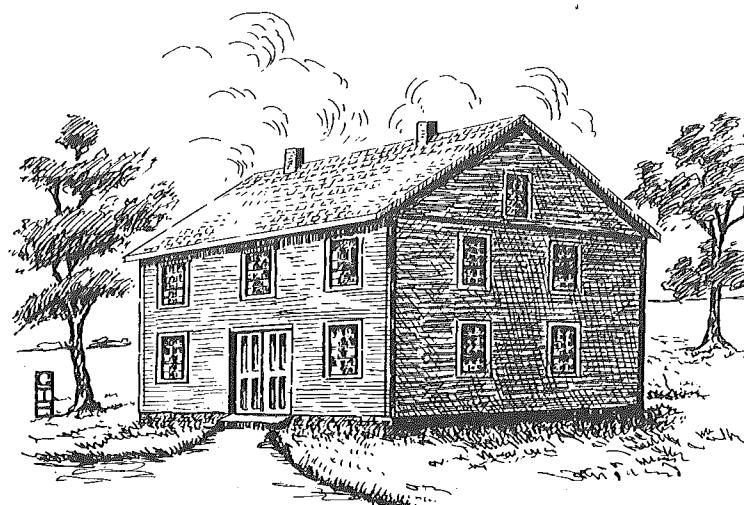
Ezekiel Cooper, for example, loved Old St. George's so much he requested that he might be buried at its front gate. His labors in New Jersey are too well known to need listing. Francis Asbury, the third pastor of Old St. George's, looked on St. George's as the Cathedral of Methodism. On many occasions he went forth from St. George's into New Jersey, on some travels taking with him Black Harry Hoosier. In recent weeks, while filing some old papers at Old St. George's Library, Mr. Howard Maag, the assistant librarian, found a letter from the leaders of Old St. George's recommending Black Harry to the "Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to assemble in Chestertown, the 1st May 1805." Black Harry's influence is thus rooted in Old St. George's. According to Rev. G. A. Raybold, *Reminiscences of Methodism in West Jersey*, . . . "Harry travelled with Bishop Asbury . . . especially in Pennsylvania and New Jersey." In 1803 he travelled with Rev. John Walker on the Trenton Circuit, doing much good. Dr. Sargeni of Philadelphia "pronounced Harry "the greatest natural orator he ever heard." (See Raybold, p. 168) And what shall I say more of men like William Colbert, George Cookman, Joseph Lybrand and many others who loved St. George's, were greatly influenced by its preachers and membership and in turn laboured, some for a short time others for a longer time in New Jersey. All were St. George's men in thought and spirit as they carried her influence to the people of Southern New Jersey.

(Frederick E. Maser)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Manuscript Journal of Joseph Pilmoor
 The Methodist Trail in New Jersey, Frank B. Stanger, Editor
 The Glory of Our Methodist Heritage, Albert W. Cliffe
 The Story of Old St. George's . . . , Francis H. Tees
 Reminiscences of Methodism in West Jersey, G. A. Raybold.
 Manuscript of Black Harry's Recommendation in archives of Old St. George's.

HISTORY OF BROAD STREET METHODIST CHURCH BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY



First Church — Built 1788

George Whitefield had mightily aroused Philadelphia in 1739 and "pressed by invitation, he set out for New York on November 12th, and reached it on the 14th. He preached by the way at Burlington and New Brunswick and afterward preached the essential truth of Christianity in almost every neighborhood from Maine to Georgia, between the Alleghanies and the Atlantic.

Captain Webb, an officer of the British Army, who in 1764 came under the influence of John Wesley, and became a fiery layman and preacher of Methodist doctrine, spent a week in Burlington during November, 1768. After that he came frequently.

According to tradition the beginning of organized Methodism in Burlington quickly followed or was directly due to the preaching of a sermon by Captain Webb, at an execution outside the jail wall on Broad Street near Library Street. The present Church stands on the jail site.

Captain Webb's regiment was stationed in the Barracks on Broad Street in 1770 and he preached in the market house and the court house.

On the 14th of December, 1770, he formed a small class and appointed Joseph Toy its leader.

Joseph Toy was born in New Jersey April 24, 1748. His father died while he still was very young. When quite young he was placed in the boarding school, in Burlington, of Mr. Thomas Powell (great-grandfather of William R. Conard who was a trustee of this church for many years.) He remained until his twentieth year and

there laid a broad scholastic foundation which proved to be so useful to him in after years.

Joseph Toy heard Captain Thomas Webb preach his famous sermon on "Justification by Faith". At first he was offended at this doctrine, being unwilling to relinquish his self-righteousness, but at last he was happily converted and became a great factor in advancing Methodism in New Jersey and Maryland.

The Broad Street Methodist Church dates from the forming of this little Society in Burlington on December 14, 1770.

The little group, which met in the homes of its members, was guided in its religious growth by its leader, who was a layman.

From time to time a minister would stop in and preach to the group and to the public. These preaching services were usually held in the Court House which stood in the center of the intersection of Broad and High Streets.

The first place in New Jersey in which Francis Asbury preached was Burlington. He landed in Philadelphia October 27, 1771. On November 7th, he came to Burlington on his way to New York and preached in the Court House to a "large, serious congregation."

Returning from New York he preached in Burlington and then went over to New Mills (Pemberton), where he preached in the Baptist Meeting House and was kindly received. He made Philadelphia his headquarters and exercised pastoral oversight over the society at Burlington. On July 4, 1772, Asbury attended the execution of a murderer in Burlington and preached to a large crowd under the jail wall on the words: "He Healeth the Brokenheart."

"In 1772," says Rev. John Lednum, "there was a good work going on in it (Burlington) under the preaching of the Methodists, it was the headquarters, where the preaching was mostly blessed to the people."

The Diary of James Craft lists the following Methodist preachers in Burlington from June 21, 1770 when "Webb, a notable Methodist preacher preached here," to 1775: Joseph Pilmoor, Robert Williams, Francis Asbury, Richard Boardman, Richard Wright, John King, George Shafford, Thomas Rankin, Robert Strawbridge, William Watters and William Duke. These were among the notable early Methodist preachers. Others mentioned by Craft include William Chandler, William Page, Abraham Whitworth, Richard Webster, Mayberry and Martin Rodda.

The preaching in Burlington was held in the Court House during the first years of the Church's history, but soon after the Revolutionary War the Court House was taken down and the court removed to Mt. Holly. The Methodists were then compelled to meet in the house of Mr. George Smith, a faithful member. While meeting under these limited conditions about the year 1787, Major Joseph Bloom-

field, who afterwards became a General and then Governor of the State, asked Mr. James Sterling, who was an active Methodist, why they did not have a house of prayer where they might meet for public worship and the preaching of the Word. Mr. Sterling's answer was, "We are too poor, we have no ground to build it on, and nothing to build it with." Mr. Sterling at once resolved to make an effort and said to Mr. Smith, "If you beg the money to pay the workmen, I will find all the materials."

Mr. Smith agreed and thus the Methodists obtained their first house of worship in Burlington. It was located in Major Bloomfield's garden on Library Street facing south and across from his residence. Its dimensions were 29 x 35 feet and two stories in height. It was later sold to a farmer and moved to Burr's Road about 2 miles north of the Burlington-Mt. Holly Road, where it is now being used as a farm building by George Van Istendal. Possibly no layman in the state in those early days did more for the interests of Methodism than James Sterling. He was a prosperous merchant here in Burlington and an earnest worker, not only in this church but in all points of the Burlington Circuit. He often accompanied the ministers, including Benjamin Abbott, thus rendering valuable assistance in establishing Methodism at other points. His daughter, Mrs. Rebecca Sterling Cowperthwait, was the founder of the Church School in 1825. Later she became the wife of Rev. John S. Porter. James Sterling and his wife and daughter are buried in the Church cemetery on the west side of Lawrence Street.

In 1820 the second Church was erected on the site of the old county jail on East Broad Street between Library and Lawrence Streets.


The present church, erected in 1847 on the same site was completely remodeled in 1887, with additions being built on the south end. Stained glass windows and a pipe organ, still in use, were also installed. The Church School Temple was erected in 1950.

(John W. Zelley)

ALONG THE ASBURY TRAIL

A compilation of the Preaching Places of Francis Asbury in N.J.
Continued from Volume 2, Number 1, 1965.

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
DILKES, WILLIAM (See Bethel)		
EARLY, JOHN	4/15/1807 4/11/1809	One of the earliest Methodists in South Jersey. His home was long a preaching place of early Methodist itinerants. He lived between Aura and Bethel and helped found Methodism there and elsewhere. His son William, became a Methodist Circuit Rider. Other members of the family were and are prominent Methodists. ²⁹
EMLEY'S CHURCH	9/29/1795 5/18/1802	Dates back to Samuel Emley who gave the ground for the church in 1790. It is located between New Egypt and Allentown in Monmouth County. ³⁰
ETRA (See Joseph Hutchinson)		
FAIRTON (See New Englandtown)		
FIDDLER'S	4/27/1776	Samuel Fiddler lived near Titusville. "The River Church Society" as it was called, met in his home prior to 1820. Titusville is about 9 miles north of Trenton. ³¹

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
FORKS	8/12/1783 9/28,29/1786 9/10,11/1791 4/21/1809	The Pleasant Mills-Batsto area at the Forks of the Mullica River. Important during the Revolution for the making of iron implements and cannon balls. Asbury stayed in the Richards mansion at Batsto. On his visit in 1809 he dedicated the present Pleasant Mills church. (See text) (See also picture)
		Pleasant Mills Methodist Church (Photo courtesy of Joseph Henry Bennett)
		
FREEHOLD (See Monmouth)		
FREEHOLD, LOWER	9/ /1782 4/30/1806	This was undoubtedly near Adelphia. (See Monmouth).
FREEHOLD, UPPER	9/ /1782	Probably in the vicinity of Allentown. (See Allentown).
FRENEAU (See Mt. Pleasant)		
GLASS HOUSE	10/11/1789	N.W. Alloway on the road to Mullica Hill. An historical marker marks the site. It was on the farm now owned by Mary Marich. The farm house, over 200 years old, was originally two stories. The Glass House stood down the hill. ³²
GLOUCESTER	5/14/1772 5/24/1772	Joseph Pilmoor and Richard Boardman, John Wesley's first Methodist preachers to arrive in America, landed at Gloucester Point, Oct. 24, 1769. The first church was built at Gloucester Point in 1839 by Robert W. Sykes. ³³
GLOUCESTER POINT	6/4/1772 6/25/1772 7/15/1772 9/25/1785 5/10/1802	

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
GODFREY	9/19/1784	A station of Benjamin Abbott, probably near Goshen. ³⁴
GOUGH	10/5/1786	John Goff (1743-1809) was a local preacher and a ship builder. He lived at East Creek, now Eldora, in Cape May County. His grave was recently moved from the old Goff Burial Ground to the Eldora churchyard. An early preaching place for Methodist itinerants. ³⁵
GREENWICH	5/14/1772 5/24/1772 6/4/1772 6/24/1772 7/15/1772	Early Methodist preaching was in a Union Church which was constituted the St. Peters P.E. Church on June 30, 1774. It is located in what is now Clarksboro. Edward Evans and Isaac Jenkins were early leaders. ³⁶ (See also Price and Sandstown).
HADDONFIELD	6/2/1772 7/15,16/1772 9/23/1784	Early preaching possibly at Joseph Thorne's. First permanent class organized in 1829. The first church was built in 1835. The congregation is now the largest in the Conference. ³⁷
HANCOCK'S	7/13/1792 10/1/1794 10/5/1797 10/2/1798 8/20/1800 7/28/1802 8/8/1804	Hulet Hancock lived between Crosswicks and Burlington. On October 5, 1797 Asbury says, "called at Hulet Hancock's, and saw my old friend of twenty-six years membership." ³⁸
HEAD OF THE RIVER (See Tuckahoe Chapel)		
HEWES, S.	9/15/1791	Samuel Hewes, Jr. lived on the N. side of the Great Egg Harbor River about a mile south of Mays Landing. Benjamin Abbott preached here in 1778. ³⁹

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
HIGHTSTOWN	10/5/1788	Early services were held in Adam Shaw's Tavern, later transferred to Joseph Hutchinson's 2½ miles away in Etra. The first church was built in Hightstown in 1835. ⁴⁰ (See Joseph Hutchinson).
HOPEWELL	4/30/1776 4/20/1807	Asbury attended a Quarterly Meeting in 1776 at the "New Light" Presbyterian M.H. The present church in Hopewell was organized in 1893. ⁴¹
HORNER, FULLER	5/10/1813 4/29/1806	Lived at Hornerstown between Archer's Corner and New Egypt. Land where Zion Church now stands was deeded in 1838 by Fuller and Joshua Horner. ⁴² (See Mount Zion).
HUGHES, JOHN	5/10/1813	Allentown. Elected trustee on March 29, 1813. ⁴³ (See Allentown).
HUTCHINSON, JOSEPH	10/4/1796 7/19-23/1797 10/3/1797 6/13/1798 9/30/1798 5/13/1799 6/14/1800 8/19/1800 5/19/1802 7/27/1802 5/17/1803 6/6/1804 8/7/1804 7/30/1805	Lived in Etra, 2½ miles from Hightstown. Society formed in his home about 1786. Built a small wooden chapel which served until 1835. Cemetery now marks the site. Four nephews, Aaron, Robert, Sylvester and William Hutchinson became Methodist preachers. ⁴⁴ Asbury stopped here often on his way between Philadelphia and New York. (See Hightstown).
JOBS	6/14/1800	Jobstown
JULIA'S	6/14/1800	Juliestown. First church built in 1824. ⁴⁵
KETTLE CREEK	9/6/1791 4/26/1809	Also called Polhemus Chapel. The present Silverton. The first church was on the Kettle Creek Road. ⁴⁶

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
KINGSTON	5/24/1791 7/1/1794 5/15/1805	A stopping place on the stage road from Philadelphia to New York. Asbury visited Henry Gulick and John Rule in 1805. There was preaching here at an early date, but the church was not organized until late. ⁴⁷
LEONARDS	9/23/1786	Leonardsville is about 3 miles from Atlantic Highlands. Capt. William Leonard and son William entertained Asbury. ⁴⁸
LONG BRANCH	9/5/1791 4/30/1809	"Old First" Methodist Church in Long Branch was begun in 1809. It is still used. Asbury preached when only the floor beam and flooring had been laid. A "Free Church" was used for services before this church was built. ⁴⁹
LUMBERTON	5/8/1813	Asbury stayed with Hosea Moore on this visit. He says, "we have a good house, after forty years' labor." ⁵⁰ (See Azail Coates)
M ^S	10/8/1786	Probably John Murphy (See Murphy).
MANASQUAN (See Squan River)		
MAYS LANDING	4/19/1809	Asbury preached in a "Free Meeting" House. Methodism was organized here by Benjamin Abbott in 1778 when he preached at Esquire Champion's and Samuel Hewes. (See also Hewes) ⁵¹
MONMOUTH	8/ /1782 9/9,10/1785 9/22/1786 9/5/1791 9/28/1795	This is Freehold. The colonial Old Tennant Church (Presbyterian) is near here. Asbury worshipped in it, but did not preach in it. Early Methodist Services were held in the Court House. ⁵²

FOOTNOTES

29. Charles Earley, "John Early: Pioneer Methodist In New Jersey," THE HISTORICAL TRAIL, Vol. 1, No. 1, 5. See also Simpson, HISTORY OF BETHEL.
30. METHODIST TRAIL, 249.
31. METHODIST TRAIL, 277.
32. Field Notes.
33. METHODIST TRAIL, 145, 146.
34. Bennett, NOTES ON BENJAMIN ABBOTT, 22.
35. Salem Circuit Stewards Book. Field Notes.
36. METHODIST TRAIL, 157. JOURNAL entries. See also article by Frederick E. Maser, "St. George's Church, Philadelphia and S.N.J. Methodism," in this book.
37. Asbury I, 468 fn. METHODIST TRAIL, 148.
38. Asbury II, 135.
39. Bennett, NOTES ON BENJAMIN ABBOTT, 9.
40. Asbury I, 580. METHODIST TRAIL, 253,254.
41. Asbury I, 185. METHODIST TRAIL, 254.
42. Asbury II, 503.
43. Asbury II, 730.
44. Joseph Henry Bennett and Robert B. Steelman, ALONG THE ASBURY TRAIL, a slide story, 6.
45. METHODIST TRAIL, 256.
46. See JOURNAL entries
47. METHODIST TRAIL, 257.
48. Asbury I, 520 fn.
49. OLD FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, History written for the 150th Anniversary of the church, 1959.
50. JOURNAL record.
51. Steelman, 31.
52. See JOURNAL entries.

(Robert Bevis Steelman)

(TO BE CONTINUED)

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Anyone can become a member of the Historical Society by the payment of one dollar annual dues to Mr. Walter B. VanSant, treasurer, 333 Poplar Ave., Linwood. The Benjamin Abbott Life Membership is fifty dollars. This Life Membership money is invested and the income used for the work of the Society.

Visit our room in the Conference Building. A member of the Society will be there every Monday 10 – 3 from September through May to assist you in your research or help you in any way we can.

The following audio-visual aids may be obtained from the Conference Office:

“Origins and Early Development of American Methodism” – a slide lecture in two parts with tape, record and script.

“Martin Luther” – filmstrip with record and script.

“John Wesley” – color filmstrip with record and script.

“Along the Asbury Trail In N.J.” – slide story with tape and script.

“Live or Die, I Must Ride” – early American Methodism filmstrip with record and script.

These should be ordered through Miss Emily Johnson, Methodist Conference Building, P.O. Box 300, Cherry Hill, N.J. 08034.

Historical information, records, old pictures, and information of special events are wanted and should be sent to our Librarian-Custodian, Doctor J. Hillman Coffee, 201 Virginia Avenue, Westmont. All editorial correspondence, manuscripts, comments and suggestions should be sent to Reverend Robert B. Steelman, 18 Fayette Street, Bridgeton, or to Doctor Coffee.